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X.—OTHER DIALECTAL FORMS IN TENNESSEE.¹

The subject of this paper as announced some time ago in the programme of this convention, is not exactly the one which it should bear. In a former paper, published in the *Modern Language Notes*, I tried to trace back a number of our peculiar words and speech usages to an earlier period of the language, using SHAKESPEARE as a basis. In the present paper this method of procedure has been attempted only incidentally. In other words, I invite your attention to a study of a few of the peculiarities of the language as found in Tennessee, regardless of their origin and history. It is not to be supposed, however, that the forms pointed out are limited to one particular state or to a small territory. On the other hand, most of them are found throughout the larger portion of the South, and many of them are common over the whole country. Nothing like a complete survey of the field, or a strict classification of the material gathered, has been attempted, and many of the words treated have been discussed by others. A few cases of bad pronunciation have been noticed, rather as an index of characteristic custom than as showing anything new.

We very frequently hear *stæmp* for *stämp*. WEBSTER cites an example from ROBERT BROWNING. Similarly we have *træmp* for *trämp*. We also hear the change from *æ* to *ø*; as, *dræp* for *drøp*.

In the word *candidate* the first *d* is often silent, and the word is pronounced *can'idate*. So *l* is omitted in *help* and *self* and we have *he'p* and *se'f*. *S'rink* is used for *shrink*, and *th'ough* for *through*. *Fift* for *fifth* is heard; also *sixt* for *sixth*, *sebun* (compare Gothic) for *seven*, *'leben* for *eleven*, *fo'teen* for *fourteen*.

The vowel *u* is inserted before *m* in words like *elm*, *rheumatism*, and *logarithm*. Consonants are sometimes inserted in a word, or added to the end. This is especially true of *d* and *t*. In such expressions as *and old man*, the added element in *and* may indicate simply a confounding of the particle and the con-

¹ See *Modern Language Notes*, Vol. iv, p. 410, or *American Notes and Queries*, Vol. iv, pp. 16 and 64.

junction, and in *drowneded*, *stallded*, *attackted*, etc., there may be an error as to what is the present tense of the verb. Confusion of words may also account for *gold mind*, instead of *gold mine*. Such addition of the dental occurs in a number of cases, especially with small words. SHAKESPEARE frequently writes *vild* for *vile*, and *vildly* or *vildely* for *vilely*; as, in "Merchant of Venice," Act i, Scene 2: "Very vildely in the morning when hee is sober, and most vildely in the afternoon when hee is drunke." In *oncet*, *twicet*, *acrost*, *dost*, and *clost*, we have a final *t* added. We also say *all of a suddent*, *wisht* for the present tense of *wish*, *skift* for *skiff*, and *take holt of* for *take hold of*, etc.

The old form *wrastle* is still very common and is heard in everyday language much more frequently than *wrestle*. In CHAUCER we have it a number of times; for example, in "Sir Thopas," line 1930:

"Of wrastling was ther noon his peer."

So *trustle* is the usual pronunciation of *trestle*, and *d'ruther* for *had rather* is a common contraction and mispronunciation.

We hear *whut* for *what*, *fur* for *for* and *far*, *frum* for *from*, *whur* for *where*; also *air* for *are*, *tō* for *to(o)*, *led* for *lid*, and *drugs* for *dregs*. *Chist* is heard for *chest*. Compare "Ralph Roister Doister," Act iv, Scene 7:

"As safe as if it were fast locked up in a chist."

On the other hand, *e* is used for *i*; *tell* for *till* (until).

Every one in this part of our country has heard *shore* for *sure*. It is very often used as an adverb; as, "I shore made that ole mule tote." Some of the most ludicrous mistakes are those made by uneducated people when trying to "talk proper." I once heard an ignorant young fellow entertain a fireside company with: "Getherin' up shells from the sea-sure." Negroes *bile* their *'taters* and if their *'lasses* get *overhæ(a)t* it is on the *pint* of *spiling*. They also say *intrust*; as, 6% *intrust*, putting considerable stress of voice on each syllable. I do not know that this pronunciation is heard except in money transactions.

The word *sōst* (or *sōot*) is almost universally called *sūt*.

Ashy is used as a synonym for *angry*. The evolution is readily inferred. SHAKESPEARE uses the word, in the sense of *pale*, in connection with the word *anger*, "Venus and Adonis"

"Still is he sullen, still he low'rs and frets,"

Twixt crimson shame and anger, ashy pale."

From being one of the signs of anger, this word comes at present to be used for anger itself.

If a stranger without baggage goes to one of our hotels, he must *whack up* in advance. When called on for the *stuff*, he must *shell out* and *ante up*, or else he may have to *hike out*. On the electric cars he must not *monkey* with the trolley. If his clothes are *tacky* and he appears to be from the backwoods, he is called a *country-jake*, and is said to look *jakey*.

In playing marbles, one boy *tailers* (*tailors*) another when he wins seven games before the other wins any. He cries *slippance*! when his marble slips from his thumb, and this entitles him to another *go*. A number of other words used in this game have been pointed out by Prof. J. P. FRUIT, of Kentucky, in Part i, of *Dialect Notes*. Of them I used to hear in West Tennessee *knock*, *plug*, *plump*, *middler*, *taw*, *shoot*, *dubs*, *man*, *fat*, *vents* and *fudge*.

We sleep under a *counterpin* instead of a *counterpane*, and call it a *coverled* until we learn that we ought to say *lid* instead of *led*; then we call it a *coverlid*. Finally some of us learn to call it a *coverlet*. Very ignorant people say *civer* (*kiver*).

We have the two expressions, *go kitin'* and *go gilpin'*, both of which mean about the same thing. The first presumably means 'to go like a kite,' that is, 'to go rapidly.' Under the word *kite*, BARTLETT in his 'Dictionary of Americanisms,' refers to *skite*, where he says "To *skite about* is to go running about." I have never heard *skite* used, and do not remember ever to have heard *kite* in any other form than that in the phrase, *go kiting*. To *go gilpin* is a common expression which I take to be derived from the story of "John Gilpin's Ride." I do not find the expression in any of the lists of characteristic expressions, or dictionaries of popular phrases.

Cranksided means twisted or careened to one side; and *catawampous* means something near the same thing, although the latter seems to have the idea of the diagonal prominent in it; for instance, we might call a rhombus a *catawampous* square. BARTLETT does not give the adjective, but gives the adverb *catawampously*, which he says means 'fiercely' or 'eagerly.' This sense is certainly very different from that in which I have heard the word used.

The word *careen*, mentioned above, is usually called *c'reen*, and not every one that uses it, even though he be of fair education, knows what the real word is.

Blue-john is a thin blue milk that has been skimmed. that is, "sour sweet-milk."

THACKERAY in his lecture on STEELE speaks in a quotation, of brandy as being *good for the wholesomes*. I have heard this phrase a number of times, or rather the singular instead of the plural, *good for the wholesome*, but I find upon inquiry that it is not so common as most of the other words given in this paper. "Seem like I done tole you dat Brer Rabbit done gone en tuck mo' dram dan w'at 'uz good fer he wholesome."²

To *rue back* is to *back out*, and is used in such examples as, "he cheated me and I want to rue back."

Chug (*choog*) is the verb used to denote the act of casting anything into the water when especial attention is directed toward the noise which it makes in coming in contact with the surface of the water. We also *chug* a man in the short ribs with the fist. I think I have heard both *chug* and *chüg*.

Could is frequently used as an infinitive, as "I can't play the fiddle now, but I used to could." *Would* is used in the same way, though probably less frequently. "He used to wouldn't dance." It is probable that *used to* is so common a phrase that it becomes, in the popular mind, equal to an adverb with the force of *formerly*; "he formerly would not dance."

To *lay off* to do a thing, means to intend to do it, and is used in the same sense as *lay out* in the first definition given by BARTLETT.

Lay-out, a noun, seems to mean *crowd* in such expressions as, "he is big enough to whip the whole *lay-out*," that is, to whip the whole *shebang*, or whole number of them.

The dictionaries give *track* for an area of land, quoting from THOMAS FULLER, but mark the word as obsolete. In this part of the country, however, it is the common term, being perhaps simply a mispronunciation for *tract*.

Shock is the usual word for a conical pile of hay. This term applies very properly to grain which is first bound into sheaves; but, so far as I can find out, *cock* is the proper word to use in connection with hay.

Every one speaks of a *stand* of corn or a *stand* of grass, meaning that it is thick enough on the ground. I do not know that this is incorrect, but I have not succeeded in finding any

² 'Nights with Uncle Remus,' p. 66.

examples of the word in this sense. I would ask information on this point from some one who is interested in the subject.

BARTLETT calls attention to the addition of *s* in the adverbs, *somewheres*, *nowheres*, etc. The first of these words is usually heard as *sume'r's*, especially in the phrase *some'r's else*.

Metathesis of *r* in such words as *purty* for *pretty*, and *pâtarge* for *partridge*, is common.

The word *hickory* is pronounced *hick'ry*, and in connection with *nut* it forms *hicker-nut*—sometimes pronounced almost as one syllable, *hick-nut*.

Obliged in the mouths of old people frequently becomes *obleege*d, and in POPE'S satire on ADDISON, the word rhymes with *besieged*.

Such vulgar words as *fit*, *cotch*, and *foch*, as the past tense of *fight*, *catch*, and *fetch*, are used only by the ignorant classes. *Drug* from *drag* and *clumb* from *climb* are more common. *Ask* (to say nothing of *axe*) is sometimes pronounced as if written *ast*. *Plague* is generally given with the short *e*-sound, *pleg*.

Ear is called *year*, but *yeast* is called *east*. *Article* is accented on the second syllable, and *yesterday* becomes *yistidy*. *Rosin* is *rosum* or *rawsum*. *Roas'nears* is for *roasting ears*, green corn.

All has a peculiar usage in examples like the following: "That's all the high (or higher) he can jump," "all the far you can throw." *Bust* is the regular word at Vanderbilt for failure, and is used as a noun or as a verb (both transitive and intransitive). *Jower* is a word in common use for a quarrel in which noise plays the principal part. "I got into a jower with him." *Stool* is an old-fashioned word for invitation; as, a stool to a party or wedding. Here is an example from J. C. HARRIS: "When I ast 'im out with us that night, he went like a man that had a stool to a quiltin'-bee." A *stob* is a stake driven in the ground, or a tall stump of a tree. "Do you see that *peckerwood* on that old *stob* over yonder?"

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